

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring comprising a substantially annular body defining an interior space substantially bounded by the body, a projection having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end of the projection being provided on the body, the projection projecting into the interior space and being provided in substantially the same plane as the body, and the distal end being spaced from the body, wherein the distal end includes fastener retaining means to assist retention of a fastener.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently amended) A ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring as claimed in claim [[2]] 1, wherein the fastener retaining means comprise an expanded portion of the projection at or adjacent to the distal end.

4. (Currently amended) A ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring as claimed in claim [[2]] 1, wherein the fastener retaining means comprise at least one substantially perpendicular projection from the projection at or adjacent to the distal end of the projection.

5. (Currently amended) A ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring as claimed in claim 1 wherein the distal end comprises a substantial T-shape.

6. (Currently amended) A ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring as claimed in claim 1 wherein the body includes membrane attachment means.

7. (Currently amended) A ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring as claimed in claim 6 wherein the membrane attachment means comprise one or more apertures provided in the body.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently amended) A ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring comprising a body substantially bounding an interior space, the body including a projection having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end of the projection being provided on the body, the projection projecting into the interior space and being provided in substantially the same plane as the body, and the distal end being spaced from the body, wherein the distal end includes fastener retaining means to assist retention of a fastener.

10. (Currently amended) A sail having one or more of a clew, head, or tack, said one or more of a clew, head, or tack having a ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring connected thereto, said ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring comprising a substantially annular body defining

an interior space substantially bounded by the body, a projection having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end of the projection being provided on the body, the projection projecting into the interior space and being provided in substantially the same plane as the body, and the distal end being spaced from the body, wherein the distal end includes fastener retaining means to assist retention of a fastener.

11. (Previously presented) A sail as claimed in claim 10 wherein the connector is attached to said one or more of a clew, head, or tack by one or more lengths of flexible material.

12. (Original) A sail as claimed in claim 11 wherein the flexible material is flexible strip material.

13. (Previously presented) A sail as claimed in claim 10 including one or more cover panels to substantially cover the connector.

14. (Currently amended) A sailing craft comprising;
a sail having one or more of a clew, head, or tack; and
a ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring connected to said one or more of a clew, head, or tack, said ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring comprising a substantially annular body defining an interior space substantially bounded by the body, a projection having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end of the projection being provided on the body, the projections

projecting into the interior space and being provided in substantially the same plane as the body, and the distal end being spaced from the body, wherein the distal end includes fastener retaining means to assist retention of a fastener.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently amended) A method of fastening a ~~membrane~~ sail, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring comprising a substantially annular body defining an interior space substantially bounded by the body, a projection having a proximal end and a distal end, the proximal end of the projection being provided on the body, the projection projecting into the interior space and being provided in substantially the same plane as the body, and the distal end being spaced from the body, wherein the distal end includes fastener retaining means to assist retention of a fastener;

providing a fastener having a hook or loop, and

placing the hook or loop over the projection and moving the ~~membrane~~ sail or the fastener so that the hook or loop is disposed at the proximal end of the projection.

17. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 16 wherein the step of providing a fastener comprises providing a loop of flexible material.

18. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 17 further including the steps of passing the loop about a further fastening member and placing each end of the loop over the ~~opposite side of the~~ projection from opposing sides of the clew ring.

19. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 18 wherein the step of passing the loop about a further fastening member comprises the step of passing the loop through an eye in a rope.

20. (Currently amended) A method as claimed in claim 16 wherein the step of connecting the ~~membrane connector~~ clew ring to the fastener includes the steps of looping one or more lengths of flexible material about or through parts of the connector and affixing the one or more lengths to the ~~membrane~~ sail.

21. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 16 including the step of substantially covering the connector.

22.-25 (Cancelled)